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General

Thailand is located in Southeastern Asia, bordering the Andaman Sea and the Gulf of Thailand.

The climate is tropical. Rainy, cloudy, and warm SW monsoons are from the middle of May to September. Cool NE monsoons are from November to the middle of March. The isthmus at the S end is always hot and humid.

The terrain is Khorat plateau in the E with mountains elsewhere.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System Information.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the baht, consisting of 100 satang.

Government

The government is a constitutional monarchy with 76 provinces. Thailand has been under martial law since February 23, 1991.

A new constitution was approved December 7, 1991 and amended June 10, 1992.

The capital, Krung Thep, is commonly referred to and known as Bangkok.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

January 1, New Year's Day; Chinese New Year; March 5, Makha Bucha Day; Good Friday; Easter Monday; April 15, Songkran Day; May 1, Labor Day; May 6, Coronation Day; June 3, Visakha Bucha Day; July 1, Half Year Closing Day; July 31, Ahsalahabucha Day; August 1, Buddhist Lent; August 12, Queen's Birthday; August 26, Bank Holiday; October 23, Chulalongkorn Day; December 5, King's Birthday; December 10, Constitution Day; December 25, Christmas Day; December 26, Boxing Day; and December 31, New Year's Eve.

In the larger ports work can be carried out on all days except December 31 and January 1.

Industries

The main industries are tourism (the largest source of foreign exchange), cement, refined sugar, paper, cotton textiles, plywood, jewelry, electric appliances and components, furniture, and plastics.

Languages

The official language of Thailand is Thai. There are some ethnic and regional dialects. Most of those dialects are reported to be spoken in the N sections of the country.

English is reported as the secondary language of the upper class.

Mined Areas

Gulf of Thailand

An Ban Don

The area enclosed by the parallel of 9°23'N, the meridian of 99°45'E, and the shore is open to surface navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.

Ao Chumphon

The waters within an area centered on Ko Mattaphon Light (10°27'N., 99°15'E.) having a radius of 13 miles are open to surface navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.

Prachuap Khiri Khan

The area enclosed by the parallels of 11°41'N and 11°50'N, and the meridians of 99°49'E and 99°52'E, is open to surface navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.

Krung Thep

The following areas in the approaches to Krung Thep (Bangkok) are considered dangerous due to bottom mines:

1. The area within a circle of radius 1 mile centered in 12°31'15"N, 100°00'00"E, is open to surface type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.
2. The area within a circle of radius 6 miles centered in 13°00'00"N, 100°19'00"E, is open to surface type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.
3. The area within a circle of radius 1 mile centered in 13°16'30"N, 100°00'45"E, is open to surface navigation type only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.
4. The area within a circle of radius 1 mile centered in 13°26'00"N, 100°19'00"E, is open to surface type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.
5. The area within a circle of radius 1.5 miles centered in 13°20'45"N, 100°25'00"E, is open to surface type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.
6. The area within a circle of radius 4 miles centered in 12°49'00"N, 100°43'00"E, is open to surface type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.
7. The area within a circle of radius 5 miles centered in 12°34'00"N, 100°45'15"E, is open to surface type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.

Ko Sichang

The waters in depths of less than 5.5m around Ko Sichang are open to surface navigation. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.

Ko Sichang anchorage is used on a year round basis. It is normally approached from the N.

Laem Sompok has anchorage for small vessels in the event that there would be adverse conditions at Ko Sichang.

Ko Chang Approaches

The area bound by the parallels of 11°51'N and 11°54'N, and by the meridians of 102°24'E and 102°32'E, is open to surface

type navigation only. The area is still dangerous for anchoring and fishing.

Pilotage

Pilotage is compulsory for the ports and harbors of Thailand.

Pilotage is usually not required for the open roadstead anchorages.

Regulations

The following are extracts from "Law on Navigation in Thai Waters" which has been published by the Thai Government, and; which applies to all Thai territorial waters and any harbors, anchorages, rivers, and canals in the Thai dominions:

Every Master of a merchant ship shall hoist her colors on entering Thai waters, and shall keep such colors displayed during daylight until the ship shall have been boarded by the harbor master.

Every vessel entering Mae Nam Chao Phraya shall stop on arriving at the Guard Station at Samut Prakan (Paknam) (13°36'N., 100°36'E.), and if necessary anchor there and allow the Health Officer and the Customs officials to come onboard.

Such Customs officials shall proceed to Bangkok, and remain onboard until due permission to discharge shall be obtained, or until they shall be relieved by the Customs officials of Bangkok.

The Master of every vessel entering or going out of any port or river of the kingdom of Thailand, excepting Ko Sichang and Ang Sila (Ang Hin), shall anchor at the guard station of such port or river, report his arrival to the officer of the station, and follow the instructions which that officer shall give him.

The Master of a vessel flying a foreign flag must announce the arrival of his ship to the harbor master within 24 hours of his anchoring or arrival in a Thai harbor.

According to normal international requirements and documents (class document, safety document according to SOLAS, and freeboard document) additional documents may be required per Thai legislation.

At least 6 hours prior to the departure from a Thai harbor, the ship's captain must inform the harbor master of the intent to depart. Prior to granting this permission to get underway, the harbor master will check out the documents as well as the propulsion system on the vessel and the ship's gear.

After the arrival of a vessel flying a foreign flag in Thailand, in addition to the declared harbor, the captain must, within 24 hours after his arrival as well as 24 hours before his departure, inform the harbor master of his actions; further directions will then follow.

Abrogation of any of these requirements can result in a fine of up to 2,000 baht.

The Master of a foreign vessel belonging to a nation represented by a Consul, shall lodge the papers at the proper Consulate. He shall, however, on being boarded by the harbor master or his deputy, fill up the book handed to him, giving at the same time a correct list of all passengers and an account of any accidents or deaths that may have happened during the voyage.

A copy of the harbor regulations shall be handed to the Master of every vessel in case he has not already been provided with the same.

In khlongs and canals all boats going with the tide shall keep to the middle of the khlong or canal.

When going against the tide they shall keep close to the bank.

When either of these courses is not possible they shall keep to the middle of the channel, observing local rules now existing or hereafter to be made in regard to navigation in khlongs or canals.

Masters shall not swing vessels in rivers, channels, passages, or fairways, unless such river, channel, passage, or fairway be clear of vessels passing, or about to pass, in or out.

Masters of vessels proceeding into, or out of, harbors or narrow channels, shall cause the speed of such vessels to be kept as low as is consistent with the most prudent navigation, due regard being had to the vessel's safety.

Masters of steam vessels going through canals shall go at a slow speed, not exceeding 4 miles an hour, and, when crossing the fairway, shall not pass within 100m of the bow of any steamship going up or down the river.

No steamship or steam launch, either at anchor or under way, shall use her whistle except for the purpose of navigation or to avoid collision, nor shall the signal be unduly or wantonly prolonged.

The same rule shall be applied to the sound signal of motorboats.

Masters of vessels are requested to inform their crews, when granting them leave, that they are not to land with sheath knives or other dangerous weapons.

Dangerous Goods

Any vessel on entering any Thai harbor or river having onboard dangerous goods, and any vessel about to take onboard any dangerous goods, shall anchor at such place in the harbor or river as shall be pointed out by the harbormaster or his deputy. The said vessel shall not be removed without the permission of the harbormaster.

The transshipment of any dangerous goods shall not take place between the hours of sunset and sunrise without the written permission of the harbormaster.

Every tank ship arriving in Thai waters having onboard petroleum in bulk, and every ship about to take onboard petroleum from premises licensed for storing petroleum in bulk shall display a red flag at her foremast head. Keep such flags flying during the hours of daylight while any petroleum is onboard.

Thereafter, as long as the vessel remains in Thai waters, it shall by night display two red lights, horizontally disposed, in a position where they can be best seen and at a height of not less than 6.1m above the deck. Provided the harbormaster is satisfied that a ship, after discharging the petroleum onboard, has been thoroughly emptied, cleaned, and ventilated, he may dispense with the requirements of this rule.

The Master of every tank ship arriving at a Thai port having onboard petroleum in bulk shall, on entering and before

proceeding to discharge any cargo, declare in writing to the harbormaster:

1. The quantity of petroleum the ship is carrying.
2. The number of compartments or tanks in which oil is stored.
3. The nature and quality of the oil, and whether it is covered by any certificate from the port of shipment or any intermediate port of call as to the temperature at which the oil gives off an inflammable vapor.

Upon such a declaration being received, and after due compliance with the requirements of the Customs, the harbormaster may give permission to the ship to proceed at once to discharge the petroleum as provided.

Quarantine

The following are declared to be the quarantine anchorages in Thai waters:

1. Abreast the Customs station at Ko Sichang.
2. Abreast the Customs station at Samut Prakan in Mae Nam Chao Phraya.
3. Abreast the police station at Bang Kho Laem (13°41'N., 100°30'E.) at Bangkok.

The quarantine station is at such place as may hereafter be appointed.

The Master or person in charge of any vessel arriving at or being in Thai waters, having onboard or having had onboard within 14 days previous to arrival, cases of plague, cholera, smallpox, fever, or other infectious disease of a dangerous nature shall.

If arriving within Thai waters, display the quarantine flag and proceed to the quarantine station to remain until released by the Health Officer.

If any such cases occur after a vessel has arrived in Thai waters, the Master or person in charge shall display the quarantine flag and move his vessel to a place approved by the Health Officer.

All vessels in quarantine shall display by day the usual quarantine or yellow flag at the foremast head with the International Code pendant under it, and by night a red light at the foremast head.

While in Thailand ports the Thai national flag should be displayed between the hours of 0600 and 1800 daily.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is GOLF (-7).

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated in Krung Thep (Bangkok).

The mailing address is 120 Wireless Road Bangkok, APO AP 96546.